

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please replace the third paragraph in the **BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION** starting on page 2 line 5 of the specification, with the following amended paragraph:

The drum tuning system described in this patent application will virtually eliminate ~~not only the time-consuming process of tuning drums but will also eliminate the discomfort a drummer experiences while playing during a performance.~~ First of all, the drum tuning system is a two-part system comprised of a ring and a toggle clamp. ~~The ring in the drum tuning system is significantly lighter and thinner than those in prior art. This thinner ring sits lower over the skin of the drum, which results in the drummer having virtually no contact with it while they are playing during a performance as well as making the drum tuning process less awkward. The toggle clamp portion of the system works in conjunction with the ring to tune the drum. The drummer merely clamps the toggle clamp onto each "hook" on the ring, clamps down on each "hook", lifts up the handle on the toggle clamp which in turns loosens the hook on the toggle clamp and allows the drummer to adjust the length of the toggle clamp's hook to achieve the desired tension required for proper tone on the drum. If further adjustment is required, the drummer merely clamps down on each "hook" on the drum's ring, and repeats the tuning process until the desired tone is achieved. Due to the simplicity of my design, drum tuning can be achieved within a few minutes' vs. the longer time periods drummers currently experience with tuning drums.~~

Please replace the **BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION** section, on page 3 of the specification, with the following amended section:

The drum tuning system is comprised of a brace ring ~~that is significantly lighter in weight and thinner than rings currently used on drums. Since the ring is thinner it sits lower over the skin of the drum, which results in the drummer having virtually no contact with it while playing during a performance.~~ In addition, the part of the system that actually tightens the drum is the when used in conjunction with a hook bolt and toggle clamp. The toggle clamp that clamps onto "hooks" is adjustably coupled to the hook bolt, which hooks onto that are on the sides of the brace ring [[,]] so that elamps clamping down on each "hook", lifts hook bolt tightens the drum.

Conversely, lifting up the handle on the toggle clamp [(.)] which in turn loosens the hook bolt on the toggle clamp and allows the drummer to adjust the effective length of the toggle clamp's hook bolt, thereby to achieve achieving the desired tension for proper tone on the drum.

Please replace the **DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS** section of the specification, starting on the last line of page 3, with the following amended section:

FIG 1 is a front view of the Drum Tuning System;

FIG 2 is a top view of the Drum Tuning System;

FIG 3 is a front view of the Drum Tuning System being used with a drum. The side and back views of the Drum Tuning System being used with a drum are identical;

FIG 4 is top view of the brace ring portion of the Drum Tuning System;

FIG 5 is a ~~rear~~ bottom view of the brace ring portion of the Drum Tuning System;

FIG 6 is a front view of the hook bolt and toggle clamp portion of the Drum Tuning System;

FIG 7 is a rear view of the hook bolt and toggle clamp portion of the Drum Tuning System; and

FIG 8 is side view of the hook bolt and toggle clamp portion of the Drum Tuning System;  
System.

Please replace the **DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION** section on pages 4 and 5 of the specification, with the following amended section:

Referring now to FIG. 1, a drum tuning system is shown in accordance with one version of the present invention. FIG. 1 is a front view of the Drum Tuning System illustrating an assembly of a brace ring (10), hook bolt (20) and toggle clamp (30). The brace ring (20) is comprised of a counterhoop (12) and a plurality of hole tabs (14) distributed equidistantly about the perimeter of the brace ring (10). Each hole tab (14) is comprised of a tab (16) and a hole (18)

within the tab (16), wherein the hole (18) receives one end, i.e., the curved end, of the hook bolt (20). ~~The drum tuning system is comprised of a~~ brace ring (10) is manufactured from materials including but not limited to metal. In a preferred embodiment, the brace ring (10) portion of the drum tuning system is significantly lighter in weight and thinner than those in prior art. Since the ring is thinner, it sits lower over the skin of the drum, which results in the drummer having virtually no contact with it while they are playing during a performance. Therefore, the discomfort drummers experience while playing drums is virtually eliminated.

In addition, the part of the system that actually tightens the drum is a toggle clamp (30) that clamps onto "hooks" that are on the sides of the ring. The toggle clamp (30) is comprised of a hinged lever handle (32) and an axle pin (34). The other end of the hook bolt (20) is coupled to the handle (32), thereby providing means for clamping down the hook bolt (20) and brace ring (10). The toggle clamp (30) also provides means for releasing pressure on the brace ring (10) by pivoting the other end of the hook bolt (20) away from the brace ring (10). The handle (32) may include a slot (36) to provide sufficient clearance for the curvature of the hook bolt (20) in either the open or closed position. The toggle clamp is made from materials that include but are not limited to metal and the handle (32) of the clamp (30) is preferably covered with materials including but not limited to plastic.

FIG 2 is a top view of the Drum Tuning System illustrating the position of one handle (32) of the toggle clamp (30) in an open position. The combination of the hinged lever handle (32) and the axle pin (34) allows the handle (32) and hook bolt (20) to pivot radially outward from perimeter of the brace ring (10). In the open position the loosened hook bolt (20) can be easily readjusted to loosen or tighten the pressure on the brace ring (10) when the drum tuning system is returned to the clamped down position.

FIG 3 is a front view of the Drum Tuning System being used with a conga drum. The basic components of the drum include a generally cylindrical or barrel-shaped drum body (50) and a drum head (52), typically made of animal skin, overlying one open end of the hollow drum body (50). The drum head (52) generally includes a hoop (54) disposed about the periphery of the drum head (52) to which the skin of the drum head (52) is secured. The drum head (52) and hoop (54) are disposed about the drum body (50) covering one end of the drum body (52).

As shown in FIG. 3, the drum tuning system is fitted over the drum body (50) with the counterhoop (12) of the brace ring (10) seated on the drum head hoop (54). The brace ring (10), which is provided with a plurality of spaced hole tabs (14), is then secured to the body (50) by the hook bolt (20) and toggle clamp (30) combination. The hook bolt (20) provides means for engaging and retaining the brace ring (10) that holds the drum head (52) down on the drum body (54). FIG. 3 shows the toggle clamp (30) and hook bolt (20) combination in a clamped down position roughly parallel to the longitudinal axis of the drum body (50).

Referring now to FIGS. 4-5, the brace ring (10) is shown in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention. Fig. 4 is a top view of the brace ring (10), which is comprised of a counterhoop (12) and a plurality of hole tabs (14) distributed equidistantly about the perimeter of the counterhoop (12). Each hole tab (14) is comprised of a tab (16), which juts out from the counterhoop (12), and a hole (18) within the tab (16) sized and positioned to receive and retain one end of the hook bolt (20) inserted through the top of the brace ring (10). FIG. 5 is a bottom view of the brace ring (10) showing a preferred embodiment, wherein the hole tab (14) is curved downward providing a curved lip to better engage the hooked end of the hook bolt (20).

Referring now to FIGS. 6-8, the toggle clamp (30) and hook bolt (20) are shown in accordance with preferred versions of the present invention. FIG. 6 is a front view of the toggle clamp (30) and hook bolt (20) combination of the Drum Tuning System. The hook bolt (20) includes a hook portion (22) on one end connected to a threaded rod portion (24) on the other end. The hook bolt is manufactured from suitably rigid materials that include but are not limited to metal. When the toggle clamp (30) and hook bolt (20) are pivoted outward to the open position, a threaded fastener, such as a nut, can be easily repositioned on the threaded rod portion (24) of the hook bolt (20). When the drum tuning system is returned to the clamped down position, pressure on the brace ring (10) will be adjusted accordingly. As shown in FIGS. 6-8, the threaded rod portion (24) of the hook bolt (24) may be inserted between a base plate (38) and the handle (32), where it is coupled to the toggle clamp handle (32). In a preferred embodiment, the handle (32) may include a slot (36) to provide sufficient clearance for the curvature of the hooked portion (22) of the hook bolt (20) in either the open or closed position.

FIG 7 is a rear view of the toggle clamp (30) and hook bolt (20) combination of the Drum Tuning System. FIG. 7 illustrates a base plate (38) with one or more apertures (40), which provide means for attaching the toggle clamp (30) to the drum body (50). The base plate (38) is connected to the handle (32) via the axle pin (32), which permits the handle (32) to pivot outward while the base plate (38) remains immobilized.

FIG 8 is side view of the toggle clamp (30) portion of the Drum Tuning showing the curvature of hook portion (22) at one end of the hook bolt (20), while the threaded rod portion (24) at the other end is inserted within the toggle clamp (30) between the handle (32) and the base plate (38).

The drum tuning system is operated by clamping adjustably coupling the toggle clamp onto to each "hook" on the system's ring, and clamping down on each "hook" ~~lifting~~ Lifting up the handle on the toggle clamp, which in turns loosens the hook on the toggle ~~clamp~~ and clamp, allows the drummer to adjust the effective length of the toggle clamp's hook , to achieve the desired tension required for proper tone of the drum. If further adjustment is required, the drummer merely clamps down on or unclamps each "hook" on the drum's ring in turn and repeats the tuning process until the desired tone has been achieved.